THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The Government of India had announced a policy in 1991 of attracting private sector investment in generation projects including hydro projects. The response from private entrepreneurs has not been encouraging. Of the 13 schemes with an aggregate capacity of 4328 MW for which "in principle" clearance was accorded by the Central Electricity Authority, only four schemes namely Baspa (300 MW) in Himachal Pradesh. Maheshwar (400 MW) in Madhya Pradesh. Vishnu Prayag (400 MW) and Srinagar (330 MW) in Uttar Pradesh have made some progress. Promotion of joint ventures between private companies (both local and foreign) with Central Hydel Public Sector Undertakings will be encouraged. The Government will provide financial support by way of equity contribution and also undertake the construction of the associated transmission lines for the evacuation of power to the load centres.

[English]

Voting Rights to Families displaced from J & K

774. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to secure voting rights to persons and families displaced from Jammu & Kashmir and encamped in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of such displaced persons who exercised their franchise in the recent Lok Sabha polls?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS, AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) The migrant electors from Kashmir Valley were permitted to exercise their right of franchise through postal ballot and for the purpose a special scheme was laid.

(c) 8.96 per cent.

New Power Policy

775. DR. ASIM BALA :
SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have drafted or propose to draft a new power policy ;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time frame within which it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Power planning is an ongoing exercise and policy is reviewed periodically, *inter-alia*, taking into account the short-term and long-term needs, availability of fuel, finances etc. The draft Ninth Plan. *inter-alia* emphasises on the following :

(i) Early completion of the on-going projects.

(ii) Maximisation of benefits from the existing plants by improving the Plant Load Factor (PLF).

(iii) Reducing the Transmission & Distribution Losses and systems improvement.

(iv) Greater emphasis on public and private investment in generation, transmission and distribution.

(v) Setting up of National Grid for inter-regional exchange of power.

(vi) Rationalisation of electricity tariff.

(vii) Establishment of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at Centre and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERC) at States level.

(viii) Demand management and energy conservation measures by different end-users.

Research Works in Science

776. SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether liberalisation has eroded research works in science;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether youths are showing less interest in getting themselves enrolled in scientific and technical education;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) its likely impact on the development of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) It may not be correct to state that the youths are showing less interest in getting themselves involved in scientific and technical education. In fact there is a keen competition among the youth to gain admission in science courses and Institutes of Technical Education. Government on its part are also encouraging students to pursue scientific and technical education by instituting student fellowships, research fellowships on enchanced rates.